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A N
E P I S T L E

T O T H E

Rt. Hon. the Earl of CHATHAM,
LORD-KEEPER of the PRIVY-SEAL,

A N D

One of His Majesty's Most Honourable Privy-Council.

L O N D O N :

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E P I T A L E

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A N

E P I S T L E, &c.

 WHILE cringing courtiers at your levee wait,
Once more to greet you, minister of state ;
And, whisp'ring vows of truth and service,
move

That some fair post may recompence their love :
A muse unplac'd, unpension'd, and unknown,
Brings you, my lord, a tribute all your own :
A tribute paid to parts, to public zeal,
To wisdom, virtue, not the privy seal.

B

Warm

Warm from the heart her honest transport springs,
And hails you, servant of the best of kings !

Too long has Britain felt her matchless might
Decline, in hands inferior to its weight.
Too long have wav'ring counsels hurt her fame,
And sunk to scorn her high victorious name.
For plans of upright stedfast rule alone
Can fix a nation's honor, or a throne.
This truth our country's antient annals prove,
Whence kings may learn the source of public love.

When fam'd Eliza rul'd, with steady hand,
This warlike isle, impatient of command ;
And tam'd with stern rebuke and temper'd love,
Contending sects that high for mast'ry strove ;
Her temper, haughty, firm, intrepid, bold,
Made choice of ministers of vig'rous mold ;
Old Burleigh, faithful to his sov'reigns trust,
And Walsingham, sagacious, temp'rate, just.

Thro'

Thro' a long term of years this patriot pair,
 By maxims sage, by watchful toils severe,
 By plans of solid empire serv'd the throne,
 And rais'd their country's glory, and their own.
 No court-cabal, no close intrigue of state,
 Nor Leister's tow'ring pride, nor Essex' hate,
 Could shake their pow'r, or from their queen conceal,
 Their high importance to the gen'ral weal.
 She saw their place did spleen and envy move,
 But priz'd their worth aboye a fav'rite's love.
 Their studious plans, their deep revolv'd designs,
 Rais'd England's state to rival Austria's mines;
 Austria, whose gold and greatness then aspir'd
 To those high hopes, which since have Bourbon fir'd :
 But Philip mourn'd his pride and baffled arms,
 As Louis late your wide-diffus'd alarms.

Of well-weigh'd counsels, firm undaunted pow'r,
 Lo ! these the fruits, and this the genuine lore,

But

But soon, the rash unhappy Stuart-line,
 Dazzled with royalty and right divine,
 To gaudy courtiers, statesmen of a day,
 Gave their rich realms to plunder and betray.
 Dishonest scene ! to see a nation's weal,
 The joys and pains that countless millions feel,
 Become a greedy minion's guilty sport,
 The Villiers, Carres, and Straffords of a court,
 Such counsels sway'd, till every breast was fir'd,
 And Charles, and freedom, in the storm expir'd.

His gay voluptuous son from exile came,
 But still his views, his principles the same ;
 Still arbitrary pow'r his sole delight :
 But fear and sloth preserv'd the people's right.
 The fate of Europe on his counsels hung,
 His counsels on a painted harlot's tongue.
 Not solemn leagues his fickle faith could bind,
 In men and measures wav'ring as the wind.

Deceiv'd

Deceiv'd by treaties, Holland's virtuous sage,
 A victim fell to wild plebeian rage.
 And Hyde, the throne's support, the nation's pride,
 His father's friend, in painful exile died.

When England's guardian genius, William rose,
 Perplext with wars, and fierce intestine foes,
 In vain the monarch form'd his virtuous aim,
 On freedom's beauteous base to build his fame,
 Still purblind faction crost his gen'rous plan,
 Approv'd the measure, but oppos'd the man.
 The prince relief in change of counsels sought,
 But change of counsels change of evils wrought.
 Till late he found that firm resolves alone
 Could fix the nation's fortune, and his own.

Last gentle Ann, who clos'd the Scottish line,
 Yet sigh'd in secret o'er their right divine,
 When, high in pow'r and fame, supreme she fate,
 Sole arbitress of Europe's doubtful fate,

C

Betray'd

Betray'd the weakness of the Stuart race,
 In Somers' fall, and Marlboro's deep disgrace.
 Exulting France, with laughing eye, beheld
 The sage the council, hero quit the field.
 And Utrecht's peace, and public faith profan'd,
 Proclaim'd a Bolingbroke and Oxford reign'd.

Of wav'ring counsels, weak misguided pow'r,
 Lo! these the fruits, and this the genuine lore.

When Brunswic's line the scepter came to wield,
 A line elect, by freedom's pow'rs upheld,
 Of temper equal, firm, undaunted, just,
 Their virtues well deserv'd the gov'reign trust.
 Confirm'd in principles of public good,
 No partial views, no light capricious mood,
 E'er check'd their stedfast rule, or chang'd their plan,
 But still the monarch rose above the man.

Thrice

Thrice happy kings! beneath whose soft'ring smile,
 Peace, plenty, commerce, freedom blest the isle.
 Averse from change, the man they faithful prov'd,
 Was long preserv'd in place, protectèd, lov'd.
 Thus Walpole saw, beneath the fire and son,
 Thro' twice ten years his brilliant honors run.
 For mild his measures, fraught with peaceful lore,
 And law, and right, went hand in hand with pow'r.
 Yet truth will tell, he spread, with baleful hand,
 The seeds of dire corruption thro' the land.
 He taught the senate, honor's seat of old,
 To burn with lust, insatiate lust of gold.
 With more sinister aims and darker views,
 The means he taught, will future statesmen use,
 While ages hence the curst corruption feel,
 And rue the hour he sap'd his country's weal.
 Ev'n you, my lord, in vain resist its rage,
 And greatly struggle with a guilty age.
 Could Aristides rule his factious state?
 Or Cato's zeal avert his country's fate?

With

With both their evils Britain strives at home,
 As light as Athens, as corrupt as Rome.
 When late, from scenes of terror and dismay,
 Your counsels rais'd her to superior sway :
 When every tongue extoll'd, with loud acclaim,
 Your acts, and Europe echoed with your fame :
 The senate's voice approv'd the gen'ral note,
 And freely gave you millions at a vote.
 But when the northern star the zenith gain'd,
 And peaceful plans, and peaceful counsels reign'd,
 Your schemes were naught, your wars a fruitless waste,
 Your conquests slighted, and your friends disgrac'd,
 St. Stephen's tribe, to int'rest ever true,
 Return'd to H----d, and deserted you.

Again your sov'reign calls you near his side,
 To watch his safety, and his counsels guide.
 But silver'd o'er with time, and worn with cares,
 His princely love your age indulgent spares.

To

To younger years commits the toil of state,
 And only claims your wisdom's deep debate.
 In that high post, with well-earn'd titles grac'd,
 Fair honor's meed, tho' oft by vice debas'd,
 Your country still your stedfast aid requires,
 For much she needs her patriot's pristine fires.
 She needs him much, but owns her trembling fears,
 That faction's crew will cross his faithful cares.
 For see, her close confed'rate bands unite,
 Conceal their anguish, yet indulge their spite :
 See, all their dark discarded pow'rs combine
 To crush your plans, and blast each fair design.
 Is there a statesman fir'd with jealous pride,
 At old and trusty service set aside ;
 Whose lust of pow'r no length of time can cool,
 Like hoary Fleury fond in death of rule ?
 Is there a peer of long illustrious race,
 Whom ample stores and antient honors grace ;
 Whose haughty stem disdains your gentle line,
 As Tully was contemn'd by Catiline ?

D

A friend,

A friend, inflam'd with petulance and pride,
 Infirm to act, yet emulous to guide ;
 Whose name, array'd in beams of borrow'd light,
 Glitter'd awhile, then sunk in native night ?
 A placeman, late from board or staff remov'd,
 Stript of the pageantry or pelf he lov'd :
 The meanest of the ministerial tribe,
 Whose vote perfues a ribband or a bribe ?
 Or lawyer, tutor'd at the venal bar,
 To spin with sophistries the wordy war,
 To torture truth, to quench ingenuous shame,
 To varnish fraud, and sacred right defame ?
 Balk'd of the post to which their pride aspir'd,
 With envy, rage, revenge, or av'rice fir'd,
 All feel at once the patriotic fit,
 And rave at placemen, pensioners, and Pitt.

Shall foes like these, a breast like yours, alarm ?
 A breast, which spirit, truth, and wisdom arm.

Shall

Shall the mean efforts of their rankling spleen,
 Drive such a statesman from the lofty scene?
 No, gen'rous Chatham! still your country's pride,
 O still attentive o'er her weal preside.
 Instruct her noble youth in depths of state,
 In plans of permanent renown and weight.
 Teach their young hearts to glow with virtue's flame,
 And build their fortunes on an honest fame.
 See, Camden comes to share the arduous trust,
 A judge, a statesman, wise, intrepid, just.
 With you the deep sagacious plan he draws,
 Of gen'rous freedom, built on gen'rous laws.
 Your watchful cares, your sage industrious lore,
 Shall England's firm imperial state restore.
 Tho' hush'd in peace, her naval thunders sleep,
 Her merchants' sails shall darken all the deep;
 And commerce from unnumber'd ports shall pour
 Her choicest gifts and treasures on her shore.
 Her cultur'd fields, with yellow harvests crown'd,
 Her lawns, that wide with fleecy flocks abound,

Shall

Shall clothe and feed the swain that tills the soil,
 E'er foreign realms partake their precious spoil.
 Again shall Hymen wear his native rights,
 And love, not gold, dispense his free delights :
 His youthful vot'ries with a beauteous race
 Shall fill our towns, and thrive in works of peace.
 America shall greet your faithful sway,
 And bid her isles and provinces obey.
 Her peaceful plains, with discord vext no more,
 Shall smile beneath the parent-country's pow'r :
 And lib'ral laws, with manly depth defin'd,
 Their distant lands in endless union bind.
 Again shall kings admire our high renown,
 And court alliance with the British crown :
 The humbled Bourbons, sick'ning at the sight,
 Shall gaze with dread and wonder at our might.

For these the fruits, and this the genuine lore,
 Of well-weigh'd counsels, firm undaunted pow'r.

Rise, matchless pair! in awful virtue rise,
 And lift your sov'reign's glory to the skies.
 Agrippa's and Mecenas' toils sublime,
 Diffus'd Augustus' fame from clime to clime.
 Louvois' designs, and Colbert's depths of state,
 Gave France renown, and made ev'n Louis great.
 Now distant Ages, distant worlds shall hear
 How George has rul'd, and Pitt, and Pratt revere.

A V V I T

This from a muse, that mounts with quiv'ring wings,
 To talk with ministers, and prate of kings.
 Yet fearless talks---for, conscious of no crime,
 What millions speak in prose, she tells in rhyme,
 And well she knows, opprest with public care,
 These idle strains will never reach your ear.
 Content, while hireling pens your place revile,
 And thankless tongues insult your gen'rous toil,

E

To

To let these lays one Briton's vows reveal,
 That Chatham long may guide his country's weal;
 Then, deep in Lethe's cold oblivious stream,
 For ever hide her numbers and her name.

F I N I S.

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